

# Advocate

Many Voices Working for the Community



## What is the ORREMSSAB?

**T**he Oak Ridge Reservation Environmental Management Site Specific Advisory Board, or ORREMSSAB, was formed in 1995 and chartered under the Federal Advisory Committee Act. It is a citizens' board that provides advice and recommendations to the Department of Energy (DOE) on its Oak Ridge Reservation environmental management programs.

Currently, Board members come from four of the eight surrounding counties: Anderson, Knox, Rhea, and Roane.

Non-voting members include representatives from the DOE Oak Ridge Operations Office, the United States Environmental Protection Agency, and the Tennessee Department of Environment and Conservation.

These members advise the Board on their agencies' policies and views.

ORREMSSAB provides a number of avenues to learn and express views about DOE Oak Ridge environmental work. All meetings are open to the public and are announced by mail, newspaper advertisements, and a dedicated information line.

**Full Board meetings:** The Board meets monthly to hear from persons working on relevant environmental efforts, listen to and discuss input from concerned citizens, form advice and recommendations to DOE, and conduct other business.

**Standing committees:** The Board established standing committees to review issues concerning specific environmental topics. Standing committees are:

- Environmental Restoration Committee
- Waste Management Committee
- Land Use and Economic Development Committee
- Environmental Health and Safety and Environmental Justice Committee



*The Oak Ridge Reservation Environmental Management Site Specific Advisory Board meets monthly to discuss topics and conduct business relating to recommendations to the U.S. Department of Energy's Environmental Management Program.*

The Board is composed of 20 members who reflect the diversity of gender, race, and interests of persons in eight Tennessee counties surrounding the Oak Ridge Reservation. Members include representatives from organized labor, environmental and health advocacy groups, the African American community, and local environmental contractors. Board members were chosen by a selection committee using applications received during a three-month membership drive.

**Volume 1  
Issue 1  
September 1996**

*continued on page 4*

## ORREMSSAB elects new officers

As required by its bylaws, ORREMSSAB elected officers at its September meeting. New officers for the 1996–1997 year are:

**Randy Gordon, Chairman**  
**Bill Pardue, Vice-Chairman**  
**Bob Peelle, Secretary**

Committees will regroup during the month of September and elect their own chairs.

Last year's officers and committee chairs were instrumental in ORREMSSAB successfully accomplishing a number of goals, not the least of which was organizing the Board so that it could function effectively. A special thanks goes to those pioneering officers and committee chairs for the Board's first successful year.

**Outgoing officers:** (1995–1996) Bob Peelle, Chair; Mary Bryan, Vice-Chair; Donna Campbell, Secretary.

**Outgoing Committee Chairs:** (1995–1996) Randy Gordon, Waste Management; Howard Revie, Environmental Restoration; Terry Weaver, Land Use and Economic Development; Sandra Reid, Environmental Health, Safety and Justice.

**ad·vo·cate** (ad'v ə-kat') *tr.v.*  
 To speak in favor of; recommend.—  
*n.* (ad'v ə-kīt', -kāt'). **1.** A person who argues for a cause; supporter; defender. **2.** A person who pleads in another's behalf; an intercessor. [from Latin *advocātus*, "one summoned (to give evidence)."]

— *The American Heritage Dictionary*

## Members tour western facilities

In July, 1996, four members of ORREMSSAB toured Envirocare of Utah, Inc., and the Waste Isolation Pilot Plant (WIPP). The purpose of the tours was to provide the ORREMSSAB members with an understanding of treatment and disposal options for mixed and transuranic waste streams.

The Envirocare facility, located in Clive, Utah, is licensed by the Nuclear Regulatory Commission and the Utah Division of Radiation Control and Solid and Hazardous Waste to provide disposal for naturally occurring radioactive material (NORM), low-level radioactive waste, and mixed waste. The facility also

has the capability to treat mixed waste to meet applicable disposal standards using stabilization, chemical reduction, chemical oxidation, neutralization, deactivation, encapsulation, and chemical fixation.

ORREMSSAB members were provided a brief overview of the facility. After a questions and answers period, the group toured these areas:

- 11e(2) disposal cell
- low-level waste disposal cell
- mixed waste disposal cell
- macroencapsulation facility
- rail car tipping facility

ORREMSSAB members toured the Waste Isolation Pilot Plant (WIPP), DOE's proposed repository for transuranic wastes. WIPP is approximately a thirty minute drive from Carlsbad, New Mexico. The group was provided an overview of the

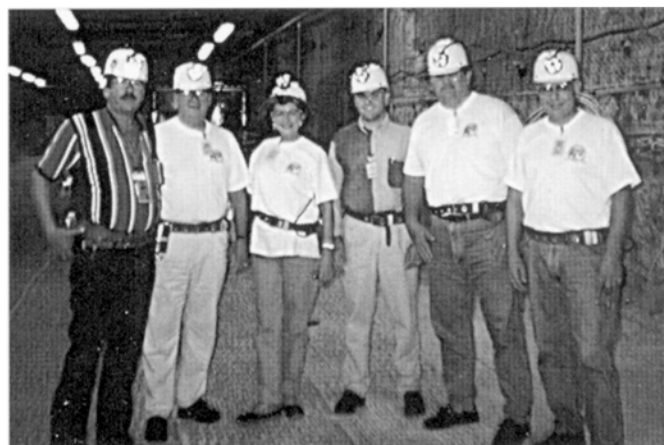
facility and given a safety briefing before touring the facility. Board members saw:

- contact-handled transuranic handling and remote-handled portions of the Waste Handling Building
- the central monitoring room
- the TRUPAC II container and transportation trailer
- the underground salt repositories

The tours provided ORREMSSAB members with a better understanding of the strategies for waste management of mixed low-level and transuranic waste streams, transportation of packaged wastes to these facilities, and the important role WIPP and private companies play in solving waste management problems at Oak Ridge and other DOE facilities.

### Feature Sites

Each issue of Advocate will feature a DOE site that has an active SSAB. Next issue, look for an article on Hanford, Washington, commonly referred to here in Oak Ridge as our "sister site." Other SSAB sites in the DOE complex include: Fernald, Idaho National Engineering Laboratory, Los Alamos, Nevada Test Site, Pantex, Rocky Flats, Sandia/Albuquerque, Savannah River, and Monticello, Utah. The newest SSAB (October 1996) is at the Paducah Gaseous Diffusion Plant.



The group touring Envirocare of Utah, Inc., and Waste Isolation Pilot Plant (WIPP) facilities during July included (left to right) Doug Schoen (Westinghouse Assistant to the Underground Operations Manager at the WIPP), Howard Revie, Rikki Traylor, Brian Westich (DOE Waste Management Division), Randy Gordon, and Joe Alexander. Revie, Traylor, Gordon, and Alexander are ORREMSSAB members.

## Learn more about SSAB

All Board meetings—including the standing committees and forums—are open to the public. You may call (423) 576-4750 for a recorded schedule of upcoming ORREMSSAB events. Board meetings and

special events are advertised in local newspapers. Full ORREMSSAB meetings are also announced in the Federal Register. ORREMSSAB maintains a home page on the World Wide Web. The Uniform Resource Locator address is:

[http://www.ornl.gov/doe\\_oro/em.ssab](http://www.ornl.gov/doe_oro/em.ssab)

## DOE's Ten Year Vision

The Ten Year Vision announced on June 26 by Al Alm, DOE Assistant Secretary for Environmental Management (EM), has as its goal complete cleanup at most DOE sites for about \$65 billion instead of the \$230 billion and 75 years previously projected by DOE. As requested of all DOE sites on July 31, the Oak Ridge Operations Office (ORO) submitted to Washington its draft Ten Year Plan (the Plan) for getting the job done.

In July, a DOE workshop and several local meetings provided opportunities for stakeholder input to the draft Plan. During August, a visit by Mr. Alm was an opportunity for stakeholders to express their views on the DOE Vision and the ORO draft Plan.

The ORREMSSAB submitted comments on the ORO draft Plan on August 31. The hurry-up approach to DOE's first iteration of its Ten Year Plan (which will be based on the site submittals) is driven by the need to incorporate this new direction into the agency's fiscal year 1998 budget which must be submitted to the White House in November of this year.

While some of the ORREMSSAB members support the DOE Ten Year Vision and the ORO draft Plan, the Board is skeptical of the time frame because it is based on some major assumptions that are not within DOE's purview. These include among others: the stability of annual budgets for 10 years (about \$680 million a year for ORO); the availability of waste disposal sites such as the Waste Isolation Pilot Plant (WIPP) which is scheduled to open within two years; the integration of waste treatment and disposal across programs and sites; the Toxic

Substances Control Act (TSCA) incinerator becoming a national resource; and the establishment of free release criteria for radioactive wastes by 1999. The Board recommended that the next iteration of the ORO Plan consider the effects on milestones if one or more of the assumption are unrealized.

Furthermore, the Board recommended that (1) the DOE Common Ground Plan for the Oak Ridge Reservation (ORR), supplemented following additional stakeholder input, be the basis for reindustrialization, privatization, and reduction of the federal footprint, (2) clean up standards acceptable to regulators and the public be established for each category of land use, and (3) institutional controls (i.e., greater than 100 years) for contaminated areas be established for the ORR. Because these are actions with the potential for significant effects on the human environment and to ensure maximum public and regulator participation in this new vision, ORREMSSAB recommended that subsequent ORR site actions and implementation of the ORO Ten Year Plan be subject to the requirements of the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA).

Copies of the ORREMSSAB comments (which contain additional specific items), the draft ORO Ten Year Plan, and the DOE Ten Year Vision are available from Sheree Black, telephone (423) 241-3665.



## What does the ORREMSSAB logo mean?

The ORREMSSAB logo is a graphic depiction of ORREMSSAB values. The trees, stream, and mountains remind the viewer of the physical environment we live in, cherish, and are dedicated to protecting. The cluster of people represents the citizens of our region—past, present, and future stakeholders whom we serve. The sun rising over the mountains symbolizes the dawn of the nuclear age and the awakening of human consciousness and conscience in such an age.

The logo shown here is pictured in two colors; however a full-color version can be seen at ORREMSSAB meetings. The colors of our logo reflect our ideals: blue, the tranquility of our surroundings; yellow, the careful approach we must take in our deliberations; and green, the need to move forward to protect the environment and the lives of those who live in this verdant, vibrant region of America.

What is ORREMSSAB? continued from page 1

The standing committees schedule regular meetings that are open to the public.

Public forums: ORREMSSAB sponsors public meetings on current environmental topics to seek comment, provide opportunities for different parties to express their views, and to encourage dialog among participants.

Since its formation, the Board has studied a variety of issues surrounding DOE . environmental work. Its review of an issue often includes detailed environmental briefings in an open forum where Board members can ask questions and discuss their views.

Public comment is key to the ORREMSSAB study and recommendation process. Each monthly Board meeting includes time for public input and response, and citizens attending the meetings are invited to ask questions and express views following technical briefings.

- During the first half of 1996, ORREMSSAB:
- provided recommendations to DOE on its environmental project ranking system
  - received briefings on DOE's Oak Ridge air monitoring, facility re-use efforts, and plans to build an onsite facility for treating waste from remediation projects
  - sponsored public forums on future land use and DOE's environmental project ranking
  - adopted bylaws, established standing committees, and elected officers
  - in response to citizen requests, chose to follow health concerns of K-25 Site employees and neighbors
  - recommended that DOE extend a public comment period for a high-profile environmental study
  - nominated a member to serve on the board of the Community Reuse Organization of East Tennessee

Meeting Schedule

**Board Meetings:** First Wednesday of each month, 6-9 p.m. Locations may vary, but are advertised in local media and registered on the information phone line. Scheduled Board meetings include October 2, November 6, and December 4.

**Committee Meetings:** Generally scheduled during the second week of each month.

**All Meetings:** For exact times and locations, call the dedicated information phone line (423) 576-4750.

Moving? Receiving duplicate mailings? Please call 1-800-382-6938 (or 576-4006 in Oak Ridge) to update your address information.

What is ORREMSSAB .... 1

ORREMSSAB elects new officers ..... 2

Tour of western facilities ... 2

Feature site ..... 2

ORREMSSAB comments on draft 10 year plan .... 3

Contributing author: Lorene Sigal Randy Gordon Editor: Rikki Traylor

In This Issue

Oak Ridge Reservation Environmental Management  
Site Specific Advisory Board  
3 Main Street  
Oak Ridge, Tennessee 37830